

Growing Brave

Words to soothe fear and let in more life

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Black&White

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I dedicate this book to my followers
who have received me with a safety
net of solidarity and sisterhood.
It emboldens me no end.

“

I recommend opening a page at
random each day. Somehow the book
seems to know the message
you need to read.

”

AUTHOR'S NOTE

My focus word for the past year was *brave*.

I believe in the power of allocating a word each January.

There is much noise fighting for our ears at the start of a new year and so, for me, drowning it all out and focusing on one thing works wonders for my peace. Since life came calling in a rather terrifying way, *brave* was the word I chose. Or perhaps it chose me?

Hope had been my focus for some time, reflecting on the happenings of 2020 and how we all endured. What it means, how it is created, stored safely, shared ... and so came about *Wild Hope*, a book which was received with such love by you all. Please know, my gratitude more than matches your supportive energy.

And now, my life flows on as life will, and I have much to share with you about this five-letter word, *brave*.

What it is, what it isn't and how we harness it. Is it intrinsic or can it be taught? Is it contagious and fleeting, like joy, or cultivated carefully, like faith?

In this book you will also find my learnings, my thoughts, my tools and a whole host of other soul messages that rose up along the way.

It is brave of you, truly, to open these pages, because deep down you already know there will be tears. There will be many waves of emotion and new perspectives you won't be able to leave behind.

And yet here you are.

Come in, my friends, come in.

Rest here awhile with me. We have much to unpack.

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WHERE BRAVE BEGINS

In childhood, it is simple
when *loved* we are brave
when love is absent, we are *afraid*

in teenage years, it is black and white
we are brave when we feel held tight
but when left to fly without a net
we are reckless
or riddled with fear
each story as sad as the other to hear

in adulthood, things get complicated

we are brave (*so brave*) for others
we got that courage from our mothers, and fathers
but we lack that childlike bravery for *self*

as though we swapped it for adulthood
maybe if we understood
that life is not supposed to be lived in fear
we could find that source again?

perhaps the journey back to brave
is a journey back to inner child
to push out fear and invite the *wild*, back in
to remember we are of the same
all players in Mother Nature's game

so maybe brave begins, then
when we begin, again
loving what is us.



BRAVE

It is, without doubt, brave, to repeat this *living* every day. To put one foot in front of the other and *carry on*, over and over. It is, without doubt, courageous to love again, when you almost lost yourself to loss. And it is, unquestionably lion-hearted of you to keep trying, to show up, to come back, to venture into new when you have been burned many times, sweet one. People who jump off mountains are adventurous, adrenalin-seeking, thrill-riders, but you, you are **brave**. I hope you let yourself know it today, and every day you show your face to the light, when darkness is calling you back.

LETTING LIGHT FLOOD IN

It is an act of great courage
to paint or write
or create anything
from your heart

but once you start

it will be like sunshine
cracking through a boarded- up window
letting light flood in

just begin

and when the judges come to rain
their deeply held pain
on that beautiful bright window frame
you made

let them
do not dare fret them

you have much higher things to focus upon
and even after that window is long gone
your song will still play

to those who can hear beauty

and you will win
this game we are in

because you let the light flood in.

I wish you the bravery
to unstitch the suit they
wove for you and restitch
it to fit *yourself* in all
your unearthed glory.



I WANT TO LISTEN

If you ever want to talk
about the person you are missing
I want to listen, *always*
and as you do this talking
they come alive again, for me
whether I knew them or not
your love, your stories
your picture painting of them works
and the air around me fills with an energy
that is life-affirming and joyful
I can't explain the science
but I can only assure you of the effect
it's real
they are real
and if you ever want to talk about them
in that energy effusive
enthusiastic way that you do
I want to listen.

“

Wonderful new people who
shine light into your soul will come
on in, if you leave space.

”

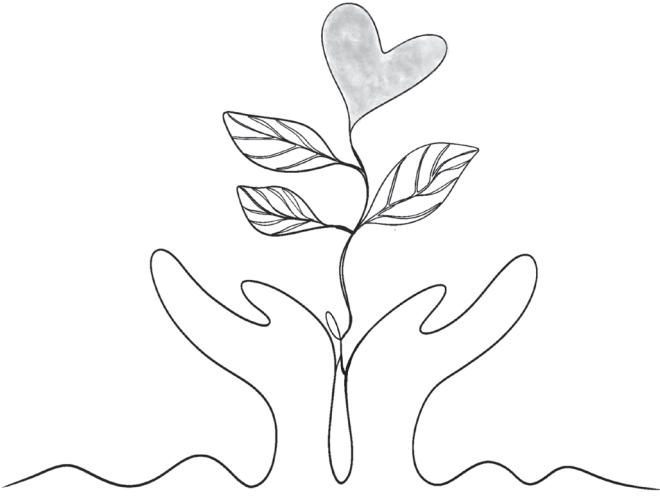
YOU'LL BE OKAY

The one thing we know for sure, is that nothing lasts for ever. In this journey, you will grieve. You will grieve people who are still alive, as well as those who have passed on. You will grieve shattered dreams, and you will grieve versions of yourself you had to break free from.

But that's okay. In this life nothing lasts for ever but with that same truth comes the knowledge that all pain will dissipate too. And great new things will emerge.

Wonderful new people who shine light into your soul will come on in, if you leave space. And as long as you cry when you must, laugh when you can and love every day your little broken heart still beats, you will be okay.

You will be more than okay.



YOU JUST GREW

It is brave to want to be better
braver still to understand
that you are already enough
but reaching for more is your right
you are a seed instructed by light
not a creature of the night
and if the other flowers in your field
do not support the way you grow
let them go
all they truly need to know
is that you are brave to want new
you are nature
you just grew
and that's okay
you did not come here to stay

let old leaves fall away.

ENDLESS SUMMERS

We hear so many warnings about treasuring the eighteen summers we spend with our children, but the truth is, they are always our children. And the memories keep coming – a little differently but just as precious, just as worth storing in the albums of your soul. These moments of bonding are lifelong, you just have to be ready to recognise them, because chances are they won't look like anything much at all, but oh they will fill your mothering heart. Slow down, my friends, there is no rush here. That child of yours is a child until the day you both walk another plane together, and even then, your baby they will still be.

HOW TO BE BRAVE

Love the moon, love sunrises
love jam with cheese
love everything you *like*, in fact
half measures are safe
but passion, that's *brave*

be you, so *you*
that it creates awkwardness
when others are not *them*

what begins as derision or disapproval
will magically morph into motivation
and much-needed *permission*
if you just brave it out

share your ugly truths
that's where the love lives
and nothing is more brave
than showing your soft skin
in a world that screams for armour

don't let loss stop you losing again

you are not here to *keep*
you are here to love
and to lose
and to do it all *again*
and again

as many times as you are gifted.

If being more you
pushes people away
they were never
supposed to be there.



THIS SORROW

I sometimes feel I brought this sorrow with me
from where I do not know
perhaps I channel it through my ancestors
the sorrow they were unable to free themselves of
in their time here on earth
maybe they are giving it to me to let it go?

so I do
I let the sorrow go
this sorrow that I do not know the origin of

and then, like the everlasting porridge pot
I find this sorrow back again
growing profusely of its own volition

trying to drown me from the inside out

and I swim through it
I float when I can no longer thrash

and on the next dawning sunrise
I let it go again

I sometimes feel I brought this sorrow with me
from where I do not know

it seems to be my journey
to forever take this sorrow
and forever let it go.

WHOSE TURN IT IS NEXT

It started when you bought me
that crystal to keep in my pocket
when you couldn't be by my side
you said it would be my guide
in dark alleyways and on *those* days

it will remind me, you said
of the light you see within my soul
and the many ways in which I'm whole

something it's hard for me to see alone

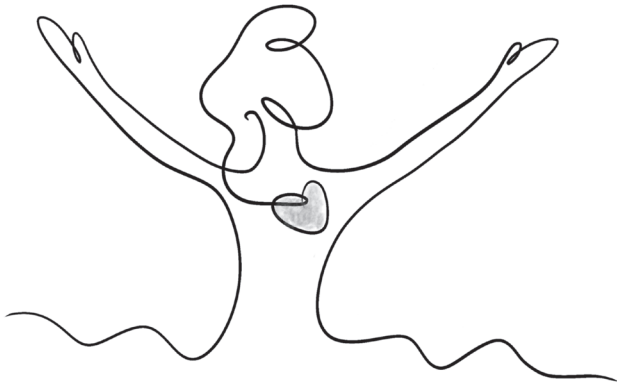
and I sent you the book
the one that finally convinced you to
follow your heart

when we are together
I buy the cakes, you get the tickets
and never once have we faltered
in our ebb and flow
of letting in and letting go
letting in and letting go

money experts
would look in wonder

at how our hearts
just simply remember

whose turn it is next.



GIVE UP

Sometimes you have to give up things you really *like* to get the things you really *need*. And it's not an immediate switch, like handing ransom money to a kidnapper. There is a barren, terrifying period of nothing, where regret and familiarity plead with you to reconsider. And you have to be strong, use hope as your shield. Hope, that behind the thing you thought was great, is something much better, waiting for a clear space. Sometimes you have to give up things you like to get the things you need. And it's worth it, my friends. I promise you, it's worth it.